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ABSTRACT

The report provides the methodology and results of a survey conducted to measure the attitudes and opinions of the community in which Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) (Nevda) is located. The members of Western Industrial Nevada (WIN) were surveyed as a proxy for community opinion, with the following objectives in mind: validate the institutional mission; obtain input regarding the relevance of programs and services; and access the communities' opinion of the educational atmosphere at TMCC. Respondents cited the following indicators as the most important components of a community college's mission: offering programs and services to prepare students for immediate employment; offering courses and programs for citizens to enhance or upgrade their job skills; offering associate degree programs so that students can transfer to a four-year college. Respondents indicated that the most important educational and instructional components for a college to provide are as follows: a curriculum that adequately responds to social changes (i.e. technological advances, changing job market), workforce education and training programs that are highly accessible to business and industry, and faculty that make a strong effort to help students succeed academically. When asked to indicate their feelings about TMCC, respondents ranked high "Reputation" and "relaxed atmosphere" while "flexibility" and "cost" were placed low on the scale. (JA)

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COMMUNITY SURVEY
TRUCKEE MEADOWS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FALL 1998

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COMMUNITY SURVEY

TRUCKEE MEADOWS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

FALL 1998

INTRODUCTION

Every three years, Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) conducts a comprehensive survey to measure the attitudes, perceptions, and opinions of the community. As a proxy for community opinion, the members of Western Industrial Nevada (WIN) were surveyed. The instrument used to survey this sector of the community was designed with three basic objectives in mind: (1) validate the institutional mission, (2) obtain input regarding the relevance of programs and services, and (3) assess the communities' opinion of the educational atmosphere at TMCC. Data derived from this research will not only lend itself to administrative decision making and the refinement of policies and procedures, but it will also lead towards a heightened awareness and understanding of the College's constituents.

METHODOLOGY

Population: The target population for this survey was the 244 members of WIN (this number excludes all UCCSN employees). From this population, 97 usable surveys were returned, producing a 40% response rate.

Instrumentation & Procedure: The survey was designed as a three-page scanable questionnaire consisting of approximately fifty questions. Surveys were mailed out initially in July 1998 and followed up with an additional mailing in August 1998.

Data Analysis: At the onset of this research it was recognized that the members of WIN would not provide a complete sample of the community. The decision to survey this population was based around several assumptions. First, the make up of WIN was considered to be a good cross-section of the business community. Second, the members of this group were likely to be familiar with TMCC and knowledgeable of the surrounding area. Finally, this group of community members was deemed to be an accessible population that was likely to produce a high response rate.

RESULTS

Demographics

Employment Area			**Position Type**			**Association with TMCC**		
	#	%		#	%		#	%
Private Sector	70	72%	Owner/CEO	31	32%	Attended TMCC	33	34%
Public Sector	20	21%	Manager /Director	39	40%	Family or Staff Attended TMCC	14	14%
Other	2	2%	Staff Member	13	13%	Committee Involvement at TMCC	12	12%
No Response	5	5%	Other	6	6%	No Association	23	24%
			No Response	7	7%	Other	9	9%
			Multiple	1	1%	No Response	6	6%

- Approximately 70% of the respondents were working in private industry.
- Owners and CEO's contributed to over 30% of responses, while directors and managers made up 40% of the population who responded to the survey.
- Over 60% of respondents indicated some sort of prior association with TMCC, either citing that they personally had attended the College, that their family or staff had attended, or that they had served on a committee with TMCC employees.

Institutional Mission Indicators

Function	How Important?		How well is TMCC doing?		
	Very Important	Important	Excellent	Good	No Opinion
Offer programs and services to prepare students for immediate employment.	85%	13%	6%	48%	29%
Offer courses and programs for citizens to enhance or upgrade their job skills.	64%	34%	14%	45%	26%
Offer associate degree programs so that students can transfer to a four-year college to continue their studies towards a bachelor's degree.	62%	29%	16%	45%	22%
Provide access to college for students not traditionally served by higher education.	48%	39%	16%	34%	30%
Provide services such as career planning, advisement, counseling, and academic survival skills to enhance student success in college	47%	39%	3%	34%	51%
Offer courses and programs to meet the continuing professional educational needs of the community.	46%	39%	10%	33%	38%
Provide comprehensive curriculum that links general education with technical.	44%	44%	4%	34%	43%
Offer instruction in basic reading, writing, and math skills to prepare students for college level work.	29%	39%	8%	31%	49%
Deliver instruction at multiple sites throughout the community.	28%	43%	19%	43%	29%
Serve as a major resource in promoting economic development.	26%	45%	4%	23%	53%
Participate in private fundraising activities to supplement public funding.	20%	41%	4%	21%	60%
Provide programs that offer personal enrichment opportunities.	15%	41%	10%	33%	45%

- On almost every indicator, respondents demonstrated a strong level of support for TMCC's mission. In particular, those surveyed cited the following indicators as the most important components of a community college's mission:

    1. Offering programs and services to prepare students for immediate employment.
    2. Offering courses and programs for citizens to enhance or upgrade their job skills.
    3. Offering associate degree programs so that students can transfer to a four-year college.

- Community respondents ranked the following indicators as the least important components of a community college's mission:

    1. Participating in private fundraising activities to supplement public funding.
    2. Providing programs that offer personal enrichment opportunities.

Education & Instruction Indicators

Function	How Important?		How well is TMCC doing?		
	Very Important	Important	Excellent	Good	No Opinion
Provide a curriculum that adequately responds to social changes (i.e. technological advances, changing job markets).	69%	24%	9%	30%	40%
Provide workforce education and training programs that are highly accessible to business and industry.	67%	28%	9%	37%	33%
Faculty that make a strong effort to help students succeed academically.	63%	33%	5%	29%	52%
Provide laboratory equipment (i.e. computers, TV monitors) to effectively support course offerings.	48%	45%	7%	24%	54%
Provide learning resources (i.e. critical skill labs, tutoring) to effectively support course offerings.	44%	43%	5%	25%	53%
Provide information resources(i.e. library holdings, Internet access) to adequately meet the needs of students.	43%	48%	9%	26%	52%
Offer hands-on experience (i.e. technological advances, changing job markets).	40%	53%	3%	16%	59%
Provide summer session offerings that include a full schedule of courses in all degree and certificate programs.	31%	47%	5%	19%	61%
Establish remote access to courses/distance education, internet courses, real-time courses provided off-campus).	31%	46%	4%	18%	61%
Provide a social climate that is sensitive to ethnic diversity, cultural differences, varying religious beliefs and sexual orientations.	18%	32%	4%	22%	65%
Accommodate all types of childcare needs.	12%	35%	6%	9%	71%
Offer extra-curricular activities (i.e. programs, groups, and organizations meeting outside of class) which meet students' needs.	9%	30%	4%	12%	67%

- Respondents indicated that the most important educational and instructional components for a college to provide were:

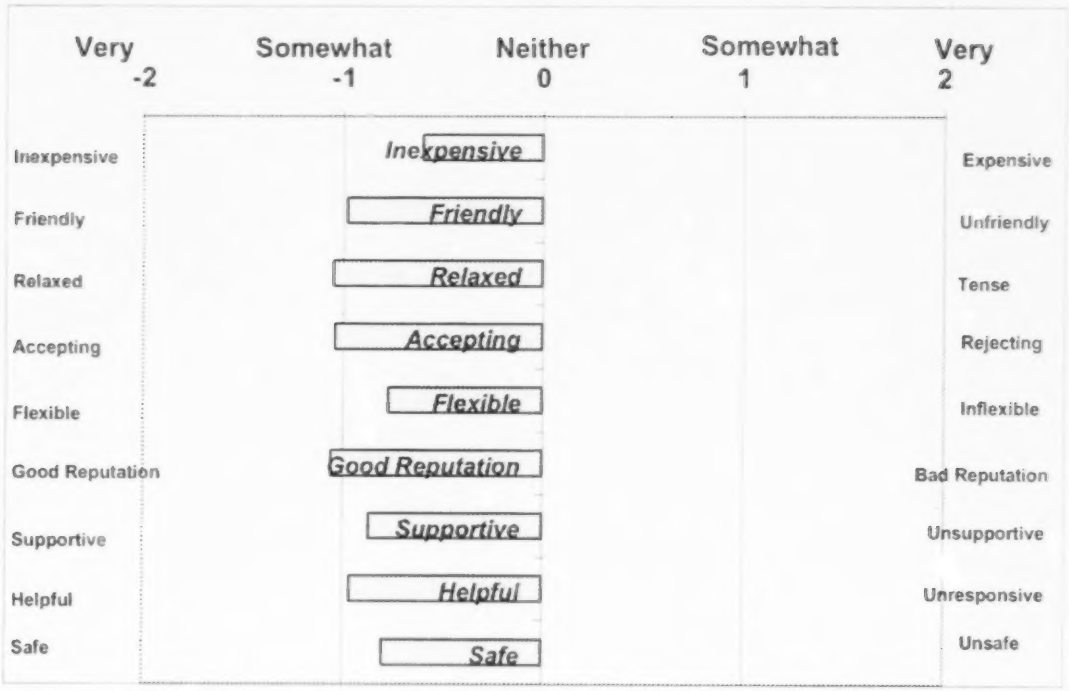
    1. A curriculum that adequately responds to social changes (i.e. technological advances, changing job markets).
    2. Workforce education and training programs that are highly accessible to business and industry.
    3. Faculty that make a strong effort to help students succeed academically.

- Those responding to the survey indicated that the least important educational and instructional components for a college to provide were:

    1. A social climate that is sensitive to ethnic diversity, cultural differences, varying religious beliefs and sexual orientations.
    2. Accommodation of all types of childcare needs.
    3. Extra-curricular activities (i.e. programs, groups, and organizations meeting outside of class) which meet the needs of students.

Semantic Differential Chart

Indicate your feelings about TMCC.



- When asked to indicate their feelings about TMCC, the majority of respondents expressed favorable feelings on all aspects of this scale.
  - Reputation, relaxed atmosphere, friendliness, and accepting ranked the highest.
  - Feelings towards flexibility and cost were placed lowest on the scale.

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